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***Aeneid* 12: A Cyborg Border War**

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‘We are excruciatingly conscious of what it means to have a historically constituted body.’

Haraway 1991: 156

Criticism of the *Aeneid* has long interpreted the poem’s human characters as belonging to an earthly mortal category positioned between the opposing strata of Chthonic and Olympian forces and incessantly pulled to either side. These symbolic readings – inaugurated by Pöschl 1962 (or. 1950) and later crystallised by Hardie 1986 – rely upon a number of interconnected but discriminate dichotomies (e.g. Jupiter-Juno, heaven-hell, male-female) that mark the poem as one of the milestones of Western dualism.¹ Although deconstructions of some of these polarities have not been unattempted,² most of them continue to be systemic to readings of the *Aeneid*, especially in its final scene, as scholars have been striving to assess whether Aeneas’ anger in killing Turnus belongs to one camp or the other.³ But to attempt a dismantling of the polarities intrinsic to the *Aeneid*’s critical history becomes more than a scholarly obligation when we are reminded, in Donna Haraway’s words, how dyads such as male-female, human-animal, culture-nature, civilized-primitive, active-passive, total-partial (to list those addressed in this chapter) ‘have all been systemic to the logics and practices of domination’.⁴ The pressing issues at stake continue to revolve around the poem’s social, political, ideological and fictional constructs, but the focus changes if we stop taking for granted a number of its supposedly

¹ The titles of both works presuppose (proto-Christian) dualistic thinking in terms of the *Aeneid*’s literary and allegorical interpretation: every image in the poem has its reverse in a symbolic meaning that is the critic’s task to uncover; the Roman empire’s secular order (and the critic’s political interpretation) finds its double in the organization of Jupiter’s cosmos and the text’s deeper religious meanings.

² Van Nortwick 1980, 1992. Reed 2007 and Giusti 2018a: 88-147 offer de-polarised readings of Turnus and Aeneas, of Aeneas and Dido and of some of the poem’s political dichotomies, especially West-East and male-female.

³ See most recently Stahl 2016 for a retelling of the pro-Augustan (or ‘optimistic’) arguments and the special 2017 issue of *CW* 111.1 on the legacy of the Harvard School and its anti-Augustan (‘pessimistic’) interpretations.

⁴ Haraway 1991: 177. See Chesi and Sclavi in this volume.

foundational oppositions, drawing attention instead to their surprising absence in places where we would most expect them and to the ways in which dichotomous boundaries are blurred.

This chapter attempts, as a case-study, a reading of Turnus and Aeneas in *Aeneid* 12 as Donna Haraway's 'cyborgs', organisms that transgress the boundaries between human and animal, organic and technical,⁵ and in this way allow us to reconfigure, without erasing them,⁶ a number of the poem's traditional oppositions. Arguably, Haraway herself may not approve of this operation. Firstly, because it de-contextualises the importance of non-physical and cybernetic technology, so essential to her *Cyborg Manifesto*; but most importantly because the *Aeneid* does not stop being a phallogocentric origin story overnight. However, I shall argue that the reconfiguring of the male actors of Book 12 as cybernetic organisms allows us to dig deeper into the reasons for the readers' frustration and puzzlement with the *Aeneid*'s final scene. For if the subjects, contexts and actors of the *Aeneid* and the *Cyborg Manifesto* are undoubtedly different, the stakes in the war between Aeneas and Turnus, as well as in the debates among that war's interpreters, are the same as those specified by Haraway for the 'border war' relations between humans and machines: 'the territories of production, reproduction, and imagination'.⁷ These are the most relevant aspects in the final confrontation of the *Aeneid*, the foundational and procreational myth of the Roman race, and starting point for the ideology of an empire with no spatio-temporal borders.

In what follows, I trace the unfolding of Turnus and Aeneas becoming-cyborgs as they are progressively reconfigured in their parallel but diverse processes of mingling with animals, natural phenomena and technical objects, specifically weapons. In many respects, this reading maps upon some of the traditional oppositions between the two heroes. Just as *Aeneid* 12 is the story of Turnus' progressive isolation both from his people and from the divine forces that supported him,⁸ a reading of Turnus in connection to organic and inorganic beings brings out the importance of disconnection and fragmentation for understanding the roots of his 'failure'. Conversely, Aeneas'

⁵ Haraway 1991: 152; 1997: 51. See Chesi and Sclavi in this volume.

⁶ See Haraway 1991: 161 on the risk of 'lapsing into boundless difference' in the dismantling of dualisms.

⁷ Haraway 1991: 150.

⁸ See Thomas 1998.

simultaneous assimilation to the Italian territory brings out the full potential of some of Turnus' most effective disconnecting images as participating in the Rutulian hero's progressive detachment, or rather forced severing, from the roots of his land.⁹ And yet Turnus' 'failure' is only apparent once we read the two heroes as belonging to a single cyborg system, since Turnus' disconnect from his land also means his eventual amalgamation with the forces of Aeneas' progressive history, an amalgamation that takes place in the moment we realise that what Turnus embodies as the inimical and oppositional double of Aeneas is constituted by, and predicated on, the discourse built by and for Aeneas himself. But there is a reversible process at work for Aeneas too. At the end of the poem, the *trauma*/wound that has haunted Turnus since the book's beginning, and progressively the Italian landscape at the hand of its Trojan colonisers, fuses with Aeneas' aching pain for his loss of Pallas – but since Aeneas is after all history's winner, his wound easily turns into a traumatically productive opportunity for reconfiguring the whole community (Aeneas', Augustus', Virgil's) as well as the imaginative, ideological role of Virgil's poem within it.

I. Arma uirumque

Fragmentation is a key theme in *Aeneid* 12 from the book's very first line.¹⁰ As Turnus directs his gaze onto the 'broken' Latins (A. 12.1-2 *Turnus ut infractos... Latinos/ uidet*), we sense that the fortifications that we just left them setting up in the last line of book 11 (11.915 *moenia uallant*)¹¹ are by now bound to collapse. This effect brings about a double feeling of disconnection and vulnerability that is further picked up throughout the last book of the epic in the various shapes of wounds, fissures and extirpations, following Turnus closely until his fated ending.

⁹ See below; this is also achieved, according to Reed 2007: 58, through Virgil's 'Orientalizing' of Turnus.

¹⁰ On fragmented subjectivities in Latin literature, cf. McNamara on Lucan's Civil War, in this volume.

¹¹ It is unclear whether the *moenia* of 11.915 refer to walls of the city or (more plausibly) to the fortifications of both the Latins' and the Trojans' camps placed outside the city walls. See Horsfall 2003: 463, Fratantuono 2009: 307.

Broken objects play a special role in this narrative.¹² *Infractos* both indicates the crushing of the Latins' spirits and conveys a vivid metaphor, emphasised by the hyperbaton and its forced severing of *Latinos* from its participle, whereby the Latins themselves become Turnus' broken weapon.¹³ The metaphor anticipates the malfunctioning of Turnus' sword (which breaks at 12.731-2 *ensis/ frangitur*, with a pertinent enjambment) and suggests a disquieting association, in the realm of the following simile of Turnus' growing violence as a Punic lion (12.4-9), between the broken Latins and the spear that Turnus-the-lion breaks and that remains fixed and clinging inside him (12.7-8 *fixum... frangit telum*), previewing the weapon that Aeneas will bury inside his chest at the end of the *Aeneid* (12.950 *ferrum aduerso sub pectore condit*). This is a sort of medical implant with poisonous and fatal implications. As we will see below, these implications directly oppose, but also eventually amalgamate with, the consequences brought about by the arrow, struck by an unknown archer, that later on in the book will be clinging into Aeneas' thigh (12.383-440).

The image of the broken Latins 'marking out' Turnus with their eyes (12.3 *se signari oculis*), with a possibly 'hostile or disgraceful attention',¹⁴ as they ask him to fulfil his duty on his own and meet Aeneas in single combat, reinforces Turnus' isolation throughout the book.¹⁵ But the insinuation of a comparison with weapons also highlights that disconnection from *arma* that will be one of the reasons for Turnus' failure. When the two heroes finally confront each other, Turnus' 'treacherous sword' shatters on Aeneas' armour, 'deserting its wielder in the middle of the blow' (12.731-2 *at perfidus ensis/ frangitur in medioque ardentem deserit ictu*). While the Latins were objectified as weapons at the start of the book, the weapon is

¹² I only treat Book 12, but it is in the whole *Aeneid* that, as Abbot 2018: 5 puts it, 'arms function metaphorically as a leading edge of the external forces that continually impinge upon the man's inner will and purposes.'

¹³ On *infringo* for broken weapons see the parallels in Tarrant 2012: 84. The image of scattered Latin troops surrounding an inimical Mars (12.1 *infractos aduerso Marte Latinos*) looks forward to the simile of Turnus as Mars at 12.331-40 and emphasizes Turnus' responsibility in bringing ruin to the Latins.

¹⁴ Tarrant 2012: 84.

¹⁵ On which see Thomas 1998. Note that many scholars (most recently Stahl 2016) imagine Virgil as siding with the Latins' unsympathetic gaze.

now personified and separated from Turnus as an unfaithful deserter (*perfidus...deserit*) abandoning his ardent commander in the middle of the fight.

Two lines earlier, when describing Turnus' preparation for the blow, Virgil seemed to highlight the warrior's attempt to become his weapon, with Turnus 'rising high with his own body *into* the uplifted sword' (12.728-9 *corpore toto/ alte sublatum consurgit Turnus in ensem*). When the weapon breaks,¹⁶ the Rutulian struggles to recognise the 'unknown sword-hilt' as a disembodied fragment of what was meant to belong almost by nature to his now 'un-armed' hand (12.734 *ut capulum ignotum dextramque aspexit inermem*, 'as he looks at the unknown sword-hilt and his unarmed right hand'). While *ignotum* emphasises Turnus' feeling of estrangement to a sword that he cannot 'recognise' as maimed, as if it were part of his own limb, we soon find out that the sword-hilt is fittingly 'unknown' (or so they say, 12.735 *fama est*), since this is the sword of Metiscus, grabbed by Turnus by mistake in his haste, as 'he left his father's blade behind' (12.736 *patrio mucrone relicto*). While the latter had been donated by Vulcan himself to Daunus after rendering it unbreakable by dipping it in the waters of the Styx as if it represented the not-quite-indemnified body of Achilles,¹⁷ Metiscus' sword is no more than a 'mortal blade' (12.740 *mortalis mucro*), badly matching the heat of its current wielder (12.732 *ardentem*). Thus, as it meets the Vulcanian armour of Aeneas (12.739 *postquam arma dei ad Volcania uentum est*), it shatters like ice (12.740-1 *glacies ceu futilis ictu/ dissiluit*), which is as 'brittle' as it is 'vain' and 'worthless' (*futilis*).¹⁸

Yet the story of the sword's origin is only a rumour that Virgil does not confirm, and some scholars find it rather suspicious.¹⁹ Perhaps the Vulcan-made sword belonged to Daunus, but it does not belong to Turnus. In cyborg terms, somatically and energistically, it is not presented as part of his body. Certainly not in the way in which Aeneas' armour is presented as part of Aeneas' body, and of Aeneas' body alone. If so, Turnus' claim to the sword by right of birth may be no less frustrated than his autochthonous claims to the land from which he becomes, as we are going to see, more and more disconnected in the course of the book. In the two heroes' arming scene (12.81-112), Turnus 'adapts [Daunus' sword] for wielding' (12.88 *aptat*

¹⁶ This can even be seen as a (failed) attempt at *intra-action* (cf. Barad 2007).

¹⁷ 12.90-1, with Tarrant 2012: 114.

¹⁸ See e.g. A. 11.339 for *futilis* as 'worthless'.

¹⁹ See West 1974: 28-9.

habendo), an expression that highlights his ardent desire to connect with the weapon, while also perhaps anticipating his failure by insisting on the failed identification between hero and object. This is more evident in the general context of Turnus' arming, as later contrasted with Aeneas'. Turnus presents as a hybrid construct made of corslet + shoulders + sword + shield + crest (12.87-9 *ipse dehinc auro squalentem alboque orichalco/ circumdat loricam umeris, simul aptat habendo/ ensemque clipeumque et rubrae cornua cristae*, 'and then he surrounds his shoulders with a corslet stiff with gold and white mountain brass, and at the same time he fits the sword for wielding, and the shield, and the horns of his ruddy crest') + the spear, which is also famously not his, but a spoil of Actor Auruncus (12.92-100).²⁰ Aeneas, on the other hand, is in a divinely sanctioned union with his armour, safely embraced by the arms (weapons) of his mother (12.107 *maternis saeuus in armis*), with the fierceness/cruelty of his character (*saeuus*) anticipating the punitive anger of 'father' Jupiter (12.843 *genitor*) as the 'fierce/cruel king' of 12.849 (*saeui... regis*). Turnus craves for a fusion with the Vulcanic weapons, as 'sparks flash from the whole of his face in his fieriness' (12.101-2 *totoque ardentis ab ore/ scintillae absistunt*) – *scintillae* of the kind that appear, in Lucilius' words, 'around lumps of metal when the iron is growing hot',²¹ and, when thinking of metals, suggest an image of melting, of inorganic transformation. And yet the transformation that Virgil presents us with here is instead a becoming-animal, as he goes on to compare Turnus with the defeated bull of the *Georgics*, preparing for a fight over the conquest of his beloved (12.103-6, cf. *G.* 3.232-4).²² While Turnus the bull sharpens his horns against a trunk (12.105

²⁰ Turnus' address to his spear rather than to the gods is generally taken to be a sign of *hybris* and impiety that, together with his despoiling of the enemies, contributes to his downfall (see Tarrant 2012: 114-5 Renger 1985: 33-4; Hornsby 1966 on the spoils). Details about Turnus' armour (the helmet with a fire-breathing Chimaera and the shield decorated with an image of Io) were given at 7.783-92 but are not repeated in Book 12. See Small 1959, Gale 1997, Abbot 2018: 15-16.

²¹ Luc. *Sat.* 3.146-7 = Nonius 21.11 *crebrae ut scintillae, in stricturis quod genus olim feruenti ferro*.

²² Turnus' connection with bulls is also underscored by the presence of Io on his shield (7.789-92; see n. 20). The fight between Turnus and Aeneas as the two bulls is staged in the simile at 12.715-22, on which see Putnam 1965: 182-6, Briggs 1980: 47-50. Mac Góráin 2013: 140-2 activates an intertext between Turnus the bull at 12.104 *irasci in cornua* and the Maenads of Eur. *Bacch.* 743 ὑβριστὰὶ κὰς κέρασ' θυμούμενοι, which helps reading the scene as blurring distinctions between human

arboris obnixus trunco) and wastes his energy in the futile attempt to lash the thin air with blows (12.105-6 *uentosque lacessit ictibus*), Aeneas the divine warrior – himself becoming the other bull who is rival to Turnus (as at 12.715-22) – coolly ‘sharpens his Mars’ (12.108 *Aeneas acuit Martem*), bringing to life the metonymy of *arma* for war with which the poem opens (1.1 *arma uirumque*) and smudging the boundaries between animal, human, god and technological weaponry.

II. Wounding

Turnus’ attempts at heating up like the sword that Vulcan made for his father are frustrated when the unfaithful blade shatters like ice in all its mortal ‘futility’. In a sense, Turnus appears now as a frustrated cyborg, his pre-cybernetic hybrid revealing ‘the spectre of the ghost’ that was always within itself, exposing in its brutally concrete metaphor how his desire to be one with his sword was nothing more than ‘a caricature of [his] masculinist reproductive dream’.²³ And reproduction, as the right to survive in the world, is indeed what’s at stake in this fight. The ice simile anticipates the rigour of death that will accompany childless Turnus to his grave, from the moment that fear makes his blood congeal in his veins (12.905 *gelidus concreuit frigore sanguis*) up to the final ‘dissolution’ of his limbs in the chill of death (12.951 *soluuntur frigore membra*) – a phrase that many have read for its underlying humanity, as it is repeated *verbatim* from the first appearance of Aeneas in the poem (1.92), when he faced death by water on the Libyan coast.²⁴ Yet the repetition also emphasises the opposite process faced by Aeneas and Turnus in the course of the poem: the Trojan can only recompose his limbs, his self and his people at the expense of the Rutulian’s dissolution. And since it is only by forging links with the Italians and their lands that Aeneas can reassemble that shattered self of *Aeneid* 1, these images of dissolution and connection are also accompanied by parallel metaphors of penetration, wounding and eradication.

Turnus’ masculinist dream of reproduction, despite its subsequent frustration, coexists with another fractured and culturally constructed identity as a ‘feminized’,

and animal. On becoming-animal in classical literature, see also Hopman, Korhonen, Thumiger and Ceschi in this volume.

²³ Haraway 1991: 152 on pre-cybernetic machines.

²⁴ See e.g. Quint 1993: 79, Thomas 1998: 275.

penetrable and penetrated body – this is in turn moulded by the interaction with the similarly patriarchal, but additionally colonising, body of cyborg Aeneas and his weapons. While Turnus strives to achieve ‘masculine’ wholeness with his sword in the narrative, we know since the simile of the Punic lion (12.4-9) that he belongs instead to the realm of wounded animals, a role that he shares most obviously with wounded Dido (eventually killed, just like Turnus, by the sword of Aeneas),²⁵ especially when they both become prey, a stag and a deer respectively, in Aeneas’ hunt (12.749-57, 4.69-73). But there also seems to be an uncanny relationship between Turnus and Lavinia in the book’s second simile. Turnus’ *uulnus* is evoked in the connotations of ‘wounding’ and ‘violation’ elicited by the verb *uiolare* to describe the staining of ivory with blood-red (Punic) purple for the blush on Lavinia’s cheeks (12.67-8 *Indum sanguineo ueluti uiolauerit ostro/ si quis ebur* ‘as if someone had stained Indian ivory with blood-red purple dye’).²⁶ Moreover, the simile is modelled on the wounding of Menelaus at *Il.* 4.141-7, the hero to whom Turnus does not hesitate to compare himself, as he refers to Aeneas as a second Paris (12.99-100).²⁷ The line immediately following the simile (12.70 *illum turbat amor figitque in uirgine uultus*, ‘love throws him into turmoil, and he fixes his gaze on the face of the maiden’) is redolent of this ambiguity, as the change of subject between the two halves of the verse is so abrupt that it allows us at first to take *amor*/*Amor*, the god who ‘pierces’ with his arrows, as the subject of *figit*. This is the same powerful god of love, and brother of Aeneas, who was ‘sitting on’ and at the same time ‘fixing inside’ or ‘settling in’ poor Dido (1.719 *insidat quantus miserae deus*). This telling slippage in the subject of *figit*, which follows Turnus’ encounter with Lavinia and precedes his

²⁵ Dido’s and Turnus’ wounds are also comparable in their narrative, as they move from metaphor (cf. 12.5 *saucius ille graui... uulnere*, ‘injured by a heavy wound’ with e.g. 4.1-2 *grai... saucia cura/ uulnus alit uenis*, ‘injured by her heavy anguish, she nurtures a wound in her veins’; 67 *uiuit sub pectore uulnus*, ‘the wound is alive under her chest’) into reality (4.689 *infixum stridit sub pectore uulnus*, ‘the wound hisses, fixed under her chest’). Cf. also their link through fire imagery (cf. 4.101 *ardet amans Dido*, ‘burning Dido is on fire’ and *ardens* Turnus (from *Ardea*) at 12.3, 71, 101, 325, 732) with Henderson 2000: 8.

²⁶ See Lyne 1983: 59, Fowler 1987: 190-1. The ivory’s provenance from India is significant is what is after all a story of colonization; on the Indian ivory of the doors of the *Georgics*’ theatre-temple and Rome’s appropriation of foreign materials, see Giusti 2019.

²⁷ See Lyne 1983: 58-9, *contra* Cairns 2005: esp. 206-7.

arming against Aeneas, brilliantly epitomises the slippage in his generic identity from one interaction to the next.

However, neither Turnus nor Lavinia end up playing Menelaus. In the same role reversal that has often been noted in Turnus' transformation from Achilles into Hector in the last books of the epic,²⁸ the Greek role in this fight is reserved for Aeneas, whose wounding and miraculous healing at 12.383-440 is modelled on Machaon's healing of Menelaus at *Il.* 4.210-19. The broken point of the arrow that is stuck in Aeneas' thigh (12.387 *infracta... harundine*) fits the identification between Aeneas and his 'second-self' Turnus who at the end of the book will be pierced in his thigh (12.926, cf. the simile at 12.7-8) by the spear of Aeneas, an identification that many have noticed running throughout the poem's second half.²⁹ And yet, as in the arming scene, the effects of the wounding betray a fundamental difference. With the goddess of love at his side, Aeneas' wound is miraculously healed and his pierced body restored as whole: 'the point of the arrow follows the hand [of Iapyx] without anyone to force it, and then falls outside, as new strengths are restored to their former state' (423-4 *iamque secuta manum nullo cogente sagitta/ excidit, atque nouae rediere in pristina uires*), giving the impression that Aeneas' flesh recomposes and reassembles under our very eyes. The reconnection of Aeneas' bodily tissues is also matched by a renewed strengthening of the ties with his family and community, since the wounding episode, with its reminder of Aeneas' vulnerability, provides the hero with the opportunity to address his son Ascanius for the first and only time in the *Aeneid*. This is a brief speech on the importance of memory and family links, and an injunction to follow the examples of father Aeneas and uncle Hector alike (12.435-440). In the *Aeneid*, Venus is the goddess of disconnection and connection: especially in the second half of the poem, which opens by invoking Erato, Muse of love and erotic poetry (7.37),³⁰ Venus embodies not just love, but the disconnecting Empedoclean strife (*Eris*) that is necessary for love (*Eros*) to reunite elements in ever-changing ways.³¹ Thus, in the cases of Dido and Turnus, both embodiments of the animals in

²⁸ See e.g. West 1974, Van Nortwick 1980, Reed 2007: 44-72.

²⁹ On Turnus as a 'second self' see Van Nortwick 1980 and 1992: 124-61.

³⁰ See Bocciolini Palagi 2016.

³¹ On Empedocles in the *Aeneid* see Nelis (2001) 96-112, 289, 245-59.

love in *Georgics* 3,³² she urges the dissolution of their cities and communities, while as *Venus Julia* and as *genetrix* of Rome she simultaneously helps Aeneas' cause of connection, allowing him to join his ancestors on the two sides of the Mediterranean. And just like Venus, vulnerability in *Aeneid* 12 also applies a double standard: while it disconnects Turnus from his own self, it provides Aeneas with new strengths in order to bolster his connection to his people.

III. Virgil's Ideological Chimera

We have seen how a cyborg reading of Turnus allows him to embody conflicting identities, reconfigured by the process of becoming-the-other in the course of the confrontation with Aeneas the invader. While the great absent character in the narrative of Book 12 is undoubtedly Lavinia, the same reconfiguration of 'feminised' Turnus also encompasses the Italian territory, as Aeneas completes his 'colonising' mission aided by both divine and anachronistic 'machinery'.³³

By the time we reach the end of the poem, the supposedly 'unaware shepherd' (4.71-2 *pastor... nescius*) who infiltrated Dido's bee-hive city (1.430-6) from within is now rather purposefully smoking out the Latins from their city walls just as a *pastor* smokes out bees from their hive (12.587-92).³⁴ The same violence inherent in the Trojans' forced removal of the old stands out starkly in the episode of the wild olive tree at 12.766-83.³⁵ This is a 'stock' (*stirps*, a live arboreal metaphor for genealogical stems both in Latin and in English) sacred to Faunus, an autochthonous Italic deity (12.766), that the 'Teucrians had removed with no consideration for its sacredness, so that they could fight/assemble (*concurrere*) on a pure and unobstructed (*purus*) plain': 12.770-1 *sed stirpem Teucris nullo discrimine sacrum/ sustulerant, puro ut possent concurrere campo*. It is deep in the roots of this Italic tree that the spear of Aeneas is

³² On Dido, cf. *A.* 4.525 and *G.* 3.243-4; on Turnus, see above. The connection is explored further and in relation to Turnus' shield by Gale 1997: 177-85. On love and animals in *Georgics* 3, see Geue in this volume.

³³ The *dei ex machina* of *Aeneid* 12 are most obviously Venus and the Dira (< *Dei ira* = anger of Jupiter), on which see Johnson 1992. On anachronistic machines see below.

³⁴ See Giusti 2014: 54.

³⁵ See Thomas 1988; cf. Gowers 2011 on how Aeneas' is also a mission to extirpate the stock of Priam.

stuck after missing its target (Turnus), just as the spear of the hunter was stuck into Turnus the lion at the start of the book. The lion's hunter, that many a reader has aligned with Aeneas, was said to be a 'thief' (12.7 *latro*);³⁶ similarly, the designation of the Trojans as *Teucrici* (descendants from Teucer of Crete) undermines Aeneas' claim to the land. Indeed, we need a cue to Aeneas' descent from Italian Dardanus (12.775 *Dardanides*) before Venus can intervene and tear out the spear from the depth of the wild olive's roots (12.787 *telum... alta ab radice reuellit*).

The wild olive's severing from its roots is a powerful anticipation of the imminent eradication of Turnus, and it prepares readers for the hero's separation from his land and the disintegration of his body and soul (12.950 *soluuntur... membra*, 951 *uita... fugit*). Previously, Turnus had been compared to another natural element, a boulder rushing headlong, torn away by a blast from its mountain top (12.684-5 *ac ueluti montis saxum de uertice praeceps/ cum ruit auulsum uento...*). The modelling of the simile on the Homeric simile of Hector leading the attack on the Greek ships like a large rock rolling down from a cliff (*Il.* 13.137 ὀλοοίτροχος ὥς ἀπὸ πέτρης) contributes to the general picture of Turnus as doomed hero. But Virgil further highlights the rock's disconnection from its mountain (*auulsum*), drawing attention to how such 'loosening' was caused by 'old age' (12.686 *aut annis soluit sublapsa uetustas*).³⁷ The image of Turnus the rock, the hero of old, rolling away from his land, is evoked again by contrast in the subsequent simile of 'father Aeneas' (12.697 *pater Aeneas*) standing tall and vast like three mountains, the climax being 'father Appenninus' who, contrary to downward-rushing Turnus, 'gladly raises its snowy peak high in the sky' (12.702-3 *gaudetque niuali/ uertice se attollens pater Appenninus ad auras*). The comparison to the three mountains (Athos, Eryx, Appenninus: 12.701-3) maps onto Aeneas' journey Westward and also 'trumps Turnus' likeness to a part of a mountain',³⁸ indicating the incoming success of Aeneas' claim to the land. While both the wild olive tree and Turnus the boulder are eradicated from Italia, both here and in the following simile of Aeneas chasing Turnus like a hound chases a stag (12.749-57), the specification that the dog is Umbrian (12.753 *uiuidus Vmber*) highlights Aeneas' Italianization as he becomes not just an

³⁶ See Lyne 1989: 164-5, Thomas 1998: 289; *contra* Stahl 2016: 14-17.

³⁷ See Schenk 1984: 227-8.

³⁸ Tarrant 2012: 269 (cf. Cairns 1989: 109-28). See O'Hara 1994: 222 for the Gigantomachic associations of the scene.

animal, but ‘the landscape’s new vital force’,³⁹ helped and sustained by the roaring thunder of Jupiter (12.757 *caelum tonat omne tumultu*). Mention of the sky both in the Appenninus and in the hound similes shows that Aeneas embodies the totality of nature and never disowns his role as associate, and even double, of Jupiter, a role that he assumed earlier in the book (12.451-8) when he became the ‘storm cloud’ (12.451 *nimbus*) that brings ruin to the trees, havoc to the crops, and devastation of the land (12.453-4 *ruinas/ arboribus stragemque satis, ruet omnia late*), causing the same ‘violent rain’ that washes away Turnus the boulder (12.685-6 *seu turbidus imber/ proluit*).

Aeneas’ identification with Jupiter’s thunderstorm continues to accompany the hero in the second half of the book through the verbs used to describe his actions in relation to his weapons: Aeneas ‘blasts with lightning’ and ‘thunders horribly with his arms’ (12.654 *fulminat Aeneas armis*; 700 *horrendumque intonat armis*), actions that indicate that Jupiter is indeed ‘at his side’ (12.565 *Iuppiter hac stat*).⁴⁰ This identification reaches a climax in the final confrontation between the two heroes, when Virgil makes it explicit that Aeneas’ connection to technological progress inevitably accompanies the presentation of Turnus as a failed disconnected hero of old both in the form of a pre-Homeric hero and in his failure to blend effectively with his arms.⁴¹ In the last simile of the entire poem, Aeneas hurls his spear with a roar louder than stones shot from a ballista, and with greater crashings than those burst from a thunderbolt (12.921-3 *murali concita numquam/ tormento sic saxa fremunt nec fulmine tanti/ dissultant crepitus*). The spear ‘flies like a black whirlwind’ (12.923 *uolat atri turbinis instar*)⁴² before laying open the edges of Turnus’ corslet (12.924-5 *oras... recludit/ loricae*) and finally piercing his thigh with a hiss (12.926 *stridens transit femur*). As Mader convincingly argues, the anachronism of the ballista (*tormentum murale*) must be read in conjunction with Turnus’ failed attempt to raise and throw at Aeneas an ‘ancient and huge stone that happened to lie on the plain’ (12.897 *saxum antiquum ingens, campo quod forte iacebat*). The ancient nature of the

³⁹ Putnam 2011: 81.

⁴⁰ Ambiguously indicating identification between Aeneas and Jupiter, see Thomas 1998: 297. O’Hara 1994: 221-2 places a colon after *intonat armis* in line 700 and makes Mt Athos the subject, turning Aeneas in a Giant opposing the gods.

⁴¹ Cf. also Klodt 2003.

⁴² Continuing to evoke Jupiter’s thunderstorm, see Hardie 1986: 177-80.

stone sets Turnus' (failed) feat as an 'archetypical heroic gesture',⁴³ 'pre-"modern"' 'pre-mechanical', that is no match for the '"modern" mechanized warfare' of the ballista simile, which instead 'looks to the future and makes Aeneas instrumental in inaugurating the new world order.'⁴⁴ For Mader, the 'deafening roar of the machine... [is] the sound of human progress'.⁴⁵

The stone that Turnus tries to hurl was a 'boundary mark, set on the plain to keep dispute from the fields' (12.897 *limes agro positus litem ut discerneret aruis*). Mader interprets this in line with Turnus' quasi-primitive behavior: his action betrays no cognizance of the stone's role as an 'emblem of orderly human existence' and appears to be 'the anarchic gesture of a man who has no stake in maintaining the civilized order it stands for'.⁴⁶ But a contrast also emerges between the Italian use of the stone to preemptively demarcate the boundaries of a land at peace, and its new violent use in Aeneas' metaphorical ballista. This is an addition to other anachronistic siege-devices used by the Trojans against Laurentum: the *testudo* (12.574-5), the ladders seemingly appearing out of nowhere (12.576 *scalae improvviso [sc. apparuerunt]*), the battering ram (12.706). Turnus, too, had raised a *turris ambulatoria*, assembling jointed beams (12.674 *turrim compactis trabibus quam eduxerat ipse*).⁴⁷ But if Turnus' tower was simultaneously an attempt at technological advancement and at reaching the height of Jupiter's sky, this is frustrated by a whirl of fire, waving towards heaven as it encompasses, and destroys, his creation (12.673 *ad caelum undabat uertex turrimque tenebat*). The frustrated attempt of Turnus' tower to reach the sky anticipates his frustrated attempt to escape to, or top, heaven, mocked by Aeneas at 12.892-3 *opta ardua pennis/ astra sequi* ('reach the lofty stars with your wings, if you like'). Here, Aeneas' scorn is amplified by the echoing of Apollo's words to Iulius in 9.641 (*sic itur ad astra*), the pun with Turnus' town Ardea in *ardua... astra*, and the allusion to the legend of Turnus' transformation into a Heron (Ov. *Met.* 14.580).⁴⁸ While Turnus may fail both in his attempts at technological development and in establishing effective relationships with the gods, he is

⁴³ Mader 2015: 590.

⁴⁴ Mader 2015: 595, cf. Quint 1993: 71.

⁴⁵ Mader 2015: 597.

⁴⁶ Mader 2015: 593.

⁴⁷ On anachronistic siege-devices in the *Aeneid*, see Rossi 2004: 184.

⁴⁸ Tarrant 2012: 319.

nevertheless offered a way to reconnect to that natural world of his own country from which he had appeared more and more estranged in the course of the book. He also embodies in this scene a way out of the totality of Aeneas' Romanization of the landscape that Ovid does not fail to pick up.⁴⁹ Indeed, the last we hear from the nature of the land is a sympathetic cry in unison with the Rutulians, as the whole mountain and its deep woods re-echo their cries (12.928-9 *consurgunt gemitu Rutuli totusque remugit/ mons circum et uocem late nemora alta remittunt*). Once the homogeneous unity of the Roman race has been decreed in the encounter between Jupiter and Juno, this may sound like a feeble echoing of the human (patrilineal, patriarchal) 'language of the fathers' that the Ausonians were allowed to keep, together with their customs (12.834 *sermonem Ausonii patrium moresque tenebunt*).⁵⁰ But the verb used for the sounds emitted by the landscape is also a bellowing back to the Rutulians (*remugit*), evoking for the very last time Turnus as the defeated bull, perhaps a tragic emblem of the (Bacchic) irrational and animalistic drives that have led him to his conclusion,⁵¹ and more certainly a symbol of the allied Italian coalition that attempted resistance to Rome's hegemony over Italia – 'land of the calf (ἰταλός, *uitulus*)' – in the Social War of 91-87 BCE.⁵²

So far it would appear that the traditional dichotomy between doomed Turnus and conquering Aeneas continues to be at work in the characters' interactions with the mechanical, natural and supernatural worlds. This is partly true, but the co-dependence between the two that a cyborg reading implies, and that doubles the mingling between Ausonians and Teucrians as decreed by Jupiter, forces us to smudge the differences and reflect upon how they are constituted. For what is at stake in reading Turnus as a cyborg in interaction with the fate of his land and in his transformation into the 'other' (the 'colonised', the 'enemy', the 'woman', the 'vulnerable', the 'weak') is the dialectic put into practice but the very discourse that

⁴⁹ Henderson 2000: 5 'what Ovid does is pick up the instructions Virgil supplies, on how to unpick his epic's attempt to pass off its partialities as totalities'.

⁵⁰ Many thanks to Victoria Rimell for this point.

⁵¹ Cf. 12.928-9 *totus... remugit/ mons* and Bacch. 726 πᾶν δὲ συνεβάκχεν ὄρος with n.15. Cf. also *E.* 5.62-3.

⁵² The symbol of resistance to Rome in the Social War is that of a bull (Italia) goring a she-wolf (Roma). Interestingly, on silver denarii minted by the Italic allies of the Marsic federation, the image is paired with a head of Bacchus (or Italian Liber), symbolizing liberty from Rome.

has transformed him into all these fractured selves that he embodies. This discourse, embodied simultaneously by cyborg-Aeneas, is in its turn a cyborg, a reconfiguring ‘chimera’, theorized and fabricated, organic and inorganic, acting as pivot and subject of the cultural and political networks of this poem and its foundational ideologies.

From this point of view, it makes sense that the end of the poem provides us with a picture of Aeneas-becoming-wounded-Turnus as he is himself wounded, both emotionally and in his sight,⁵³ by the image of Pallas’ baldric and its belt’s ‘flashing’ studs (12.941-3 *apparuit... balteus et notis fulserunt cingula bullis/ Pallantis pueri*). If what pushes Aeneas to react to this view is his obligation to Evander to avenge Pallas, it is telling that these are also fractured inorganic pieces of a hero who stood symbolically for patrilineality, now badly stitched onto the assemblage of another warrior who has been so far both feminized and denied a future offspring, despite his attempt to appeal to Aeneas precisely by evoking his father Daunus side by side with Anchises (12.932-4). Surely it is the emotional wound caused by the recollection of this loss that, much like Achilles’ pain for Patroclus in Berzins McCoy’s reading,⁵⁴ propels that political resolution of the ending as the composition and formation of the *gens Romana*. This loss also doubles the loss of the Trojans’ identity, of their name and their language, in that very formation. But when Aeneas penetrates Turnus’ chest with the sword as he is penetrated in his eyes by the baldric, when he ‘buries’ (12.950 *condit*) his steel in his ‘second self’s’ flesh while repeating-anticipating the same act of ‘founding’ a city (*condere*) that necessitates Romulus’ fratricide of his own ‘second self’ Remus – when he, in fact, fuses the very act of founding cultural identity and society with that of joining inorganic and organic,⁵⁵ we readers are left with an uncanny feeling. For in denying to us those traditional dichotomies male-female, colonizer-colonized, Eastern-Western that the wedding between Aeneas (male, colonizer, Trojan) and Lavinia (female, colonized, Italian) would have reconfirmed, the dissolution of differences ingrained within the end of the *Aeneid* leaves us with an unsettling cultural, political and ideological chimera. This is the all-encompassing

⁵³ See Mac Góráin (2018) 417-20 on the mixture of intromission and extramission optical models in this scene.

⁵⁴ Berzins McCoy 2013: 1-35.

⁵⁵ See Henderson 2000: 12, although he does not quite make this point: “‘founding’ (tradition, society, cultural identity) must fuse with ‘burying’ (steel in Latin flesh), and both must fuse with ‘hiding’ (the victim down in hell...)”.

discourse of this brand-new empire with no genesis and no end that allows the *Aeneid*'s pluralization of voices and politico-ideological stances – a discourse that is able to incorporate, as in a cyborg world, 'permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints'⁵⁶ and which has no need to reproduce biologically, because it can replicate itself mechanically.⁵⁷ Every bit of the *Aeneid* can partake productively in it when it is viewed 'cyborgically' as a necessarily partial fragment dialoguing within its ever-evolving network. But it is the process itself of writing the *Aeneid*, of setting up and exposing the network, that provides a way out of the otherwise totalizing compliance to that discourse. As Donna Haraway puts it, "Networking" is both a feminist practice and a multinational corporate strategy – weaving is for oppositional cyborgs'.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Haraway 1991: 154.

⁵⁷ The *gens Romana* at the end of the *Aeneid* is born not from a traditional myth of reproduction, but from the establishment of amical and inimical relationships (albeit among males) that almost responds to Haraway's 2015 slogan 'Make Kin Not Babies!', although in this particular case one would have good reason to worry about the 'Not Babies' part of the injunction (Haraway 2015: 164 n. 17).

⁵⁸ Haraway 1991: 170. I have treated the totalising and contradictory nature Augustan ideology in Giusti 2018b and have dealt differently with the paradox of Virgil's *imperium sine fine* in Giusti forthcoming. Sincere thanks to the volume's editors (Giulia Maria Chesi and Francesca Spiegel), and to John Henderson, Fiachra Mac Góráin and especially Victoria Rimell.

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